WRL NEWS

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Come to Washington October 16

Boston begins trek to Washington, D.C. on August 7, 1976. *photo by Eric Roth*

by Ed Hedemann, Vickie Leonard, Maureen O'Donnell

Reaching Washington,D.C., is not the main purpose of the Continental Walk — or else, we might have taken a plane to save time, energy and money. Among the purposes of the Walk is to reach out to as many people as possible, to raise the need for disarmament and social justice (while showing the connections), to demonstrate our commitment by walking, to link together communities across the continent and the various struggles for political and social justice.

So *if* the walkers were to disband as they enter Washington,D.C., on October 16, the Walk will have succeeded in its prime purposes. However, the Walk is planning a fitting finale in Washington two weeks before election day with the following events:

Saturday, October 16
- mass rally at Sylvan theater
- evening concert

Sunday, October 17
- ecumenical services and leafleting of churches
- Peace and Social Justice Fair
- workshops in preparation for Monday's actions

Monday, October 18
- Death Walk to Pentagon followed by Life Walk to White House.

Tuesday, October 19
- evaluation of Walk and planning for follow-up activities.

In keeping with the grass roots theme of the Walk, those who cannot attend the activities in Washington are encouraged to plan events in their own communities from October 16-18; events which might include a rally, a forum, a demonstration, leafleting, a peace and justice fair, or returning to the site focussed on when the Walk passed through.

For all who can . . .1) distribute the "Call to Washington" fliers (available from the Continental Walk, 339 Lafayette Street, New York,NY 10012, 212/677-5455) to friends and local mailing lists, 2) place ads in local papers and on the radio, 3) charter buses, 4) **COME TO WASHINGTON.**

WALKERS LEAVE BOSTON

The Boston to Washington route of the Continental Walk got its send-off in a series of events that, despite the rain, were enthusiastically attended.

On Friday, August 6, Hiroshima Day was remembered with a silent vigil from noon to 2 pm at Government Center in Boston. The vigil was attended by 150 people. The vigilers were met at Government Center by a group of 20 walkers from the Worcester to Boston route of the Walk.

While the vigil was continued outside, a committee of four went into Government Center to present the letter from the Mayor of Hiroshima to Mayor Kevin White of Boston. The vigil ended at 2 pm when everyone gathered in a circle, which extended around most of the plaza, for a moment of silence.

On Friday evening 200 attended a citizens' forum which was held at Boston's Faneuil Hall, despite the pouring rain outside. The forum featured Daniel Ellsberg and Cambridge City Councilwoman Saundra Graham, and included singing by Charlie King.

On Saturday morning the numbers, held down by the rain, swelled to 100 as walkers gathered for a rally at Faneuil Hall. The walkers made stops at the Tenant's Union and Health Center in the South End, the Army Recruiting Office, and a community-based prison reform group in Dorchester. The Boston walkers then headed toward their demonstration on August 11 at the Plymouth Nuclear Power Plant.

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Southern route walkers including Jim Peck (standing with sign) confront police after their arrest on July 27, 1976 in Birmingham, AL.

photo by Judy Garrison

ARRESTS AND ARSON PLAGUE SOUTHERN WALK

Nineteen participants of the Southern route of the Continental Walk were arrested by police in Birmingham, Alabama, at noon on July 27 for "walking in a roadway" and "failing to obey the lawful order of a police officer." This marks the third arrest of the Southern Walk all of which have been a clear violation of the walkers constitutionally-guaranteed freedom of expression.

The arrested walkers included three Japanese Buddhist monks, Jim Peck, and many members of the SCLC. Bail was set at $200 and a hearing set for August 2.

According to organizer Ruby Williams, who had obtained the "parade" permit, the trouble apparently resulted from the confusion over specifics of the permit. While the permit required the walkers to remain on the sidewalks, Ruby Williams was seeking permission from the city officials for the walkers to use one lane of the street.

The walkers were released at 5 PM Wednesday, July 28 on their own recognizance, all charges dropped and Mayor David Vann called the arrests an "unfortunate misunderstanding."

A couple of days later the car of one of the white organizers from Birmingham was fire-bombed followed by a telephone warning to not house any more "niggers."

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LINCOLN/CHICAGO ROUTE

A small group of walkers left Lincoln, Nebraska, to join up with the main route of the Walk in Chicago, after passing through Iowa. Though the walkers (who vary in number from 4 to 25, but usually 6 to 8) have gotten minor harrassment, a day hasn't passed where someone has given them warm greetings, a glass of ice tea, and friendly goodbyes. Cops in Coralville threatened to arrest them for "eating in the ditch". The Newton police entered a chuch where they were staying at 3 am and threatened to shoot them if they didn't leave! The walk had good turnouts and rallies in Des Moines and Grinnell.

WALK PASSES THROUGH MISSOURI

Meanwhile in Missouri, a string of well-organized cities received the Walk with enthusiasm. Only July 24 and 29 Missourians for Safe Energy involved the Walk in actions opposing the construction of a nuclear power plant near Fulton. On July 30, the mayor of Columbia received the walkers and signed the Hiroshima appeal on what was officially proclaimed to be "Continental Walk Day." A three-mile walk took over 100 people through Columbia's needy neighborhood and downtown to Columbia College for a rally. The rally of 200 to 250 people (highest number of people in Columbia at any demonstration since 1972) was a happy reunion for many local activists where greetings were warm in a mood of heightened hope as food, music, and speakers flowed into midafternoon.

MINNESOTA/WISCONSIN ROUTE

The Minnesota/Wisconsin Walk left Stillwater State Prison on July 14 and three walkers were arrested on July 17 at the Northern State Power Plant near Minneapolis for trying to leaflet on the site and talk with workers. Their trial has been postponed as they have rejoined the Walk. Media coverage was excellent since a Minneapolis *Star Tribune* reporter was with them.

The Walk arrived in Madison August 11-12. a public ceremony at noon attracted 125 people on the State Capitol steps with city officials signing the Hiroshima Appeal. The Mayor of Madison greeted the walkers after his return from an anti-nuclear weapons conference in Hiroshima. After the public meeting, walkers proceeded to Waupun State Prison for activities there in solidarity with inmates who are being held in segregated cells and have had their visiting rights limited.

Ed Hedemann, Vickie Leonard, and Maureen O'Donnell are staff members of the Continental Walk national office.

Stewart Meacham soaking his weary feet after a day on the road in Kansas. Stewart, former AFSC Peace Education Secretary from 1960-1971 and Co-director of the Quaker International Seminars in Southeast Asia from 1971-1976, spent a month on the Walk. He called it, "One of the few experiences in my life that had a certain purity to it. The response everywhere was really tremendous and it is hard to put in words just how deep this thing goes." Stewart currently works with THE CAMPAIGN OF ONE MILLION, a petition drive seeking recognition and reconstruction in Vietnam; and amnesty and rehabilitation at home. ***photo by Jane Fowler Morse***

THE WALK ROUTES

There are currently (mid-August) six routes of the Walk in progress with three more due to begin within a few weeks:

- the *main route* from the West which began in Ukiah, California, January 21 and is currently in mid-Illinois
- the *Southern route* which began in New Orleans April 4 is currently in eastern Alabama
- the *Nebraska/Iowa route* which began in Lincoln on July 12 is currently in Illinois to join the main route in Chicago
- the *Minnesota/Wisconsin route* which began in Stillwater, Wisconsin, on July 14 is currently in Madison and will join the main route in Chicago
- the *New England to Washington route* which began in Boston August 6 is currently in Rhode Island
- the *Western Massachusetts route* is in progress and will join in New Haven with the route from Boston
- the *Syracuse to Cleveland route* leaves August 22
- the *Albany route* leaves for New York City September 1
- the *Appalachian route* begins September 5 at Oak Ridge, Tennessee, and joins the Southern route in Fredricksburg, Virginia, just before entering Washington.
- the *Minnesota/Wisconsin route* which began in Stillwater, Wisconsin, on July 14 is currently in Madison and will join the main route in Chicago
- the *New England to Washington route* which began in Boston August 6 is currently in Rhode Island

THE JAPANESE CONNECTION

by David McReynolds

Last December a Japanese delegation of peace workers visited New York City and, at a meeting hosted by WRL and, with an impressive range of speakers including Nobel Prize Winner, George Wald, a tentative invitation was issued to the Japanese peace movement to send representatives to take part in the Walk. The invitation was confirmed by the Walk Steering Committee . . . but in the meantime the Venerable Sato, a former Japanese military officer and now a leading Buddhist monk, had already cabled that a team would be in California for the start of the Walk. And so they were.

And then some of the Japanese joined the Southern route and shared in the arrests, the heat, the experience of moving through Delta country. The New England route, which began in Boston on August 6, has a team of monks that flew in to join. Robed, beating the old drums they carry, chanting, they keep a relentless pace, seem in good humor despite what must be the culture shock of visiting a country so grimy and untidy as compared to their native land.

Where do the funds come from to bring these visitors? The Buddhists raise the funds themselves in Japan, begging in the streets, calling on the poorest to share the cost of this extraordinary transnational action. And why are they here? Is it only a gesture of sentiment, a token of American guilt over Hiroshima? No, it is more than that. Partly it is because Japan Buddha Sangha, to which the monks and nuns belong, is opening a temple in Washington,D.C. and the

Kunio Sato and Rev. Hitoshi Tsuchiya from Japan Buddha Singha greeting Missourians.

photo by Mary Bradford

Buddhist walkers will help consecrate it. But they are also here as a powerful expression of "two-nation solidarity" on the level *of the people.* There are powerful forces in the U.S. and Japan which want a "nuclear Japan". But the *people* of these two nations are determined that the last atomic bomb that fell shall be—must be—the *last* atomic bomb ever used. The Japanese visitors are colorful. But their presence among us is serious. And there is an implied understanding that next year there must be an American pacifist delegation in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, including some of the Walkers and

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Crossing the state of Kansas.

photo by Jane Fowler Morse

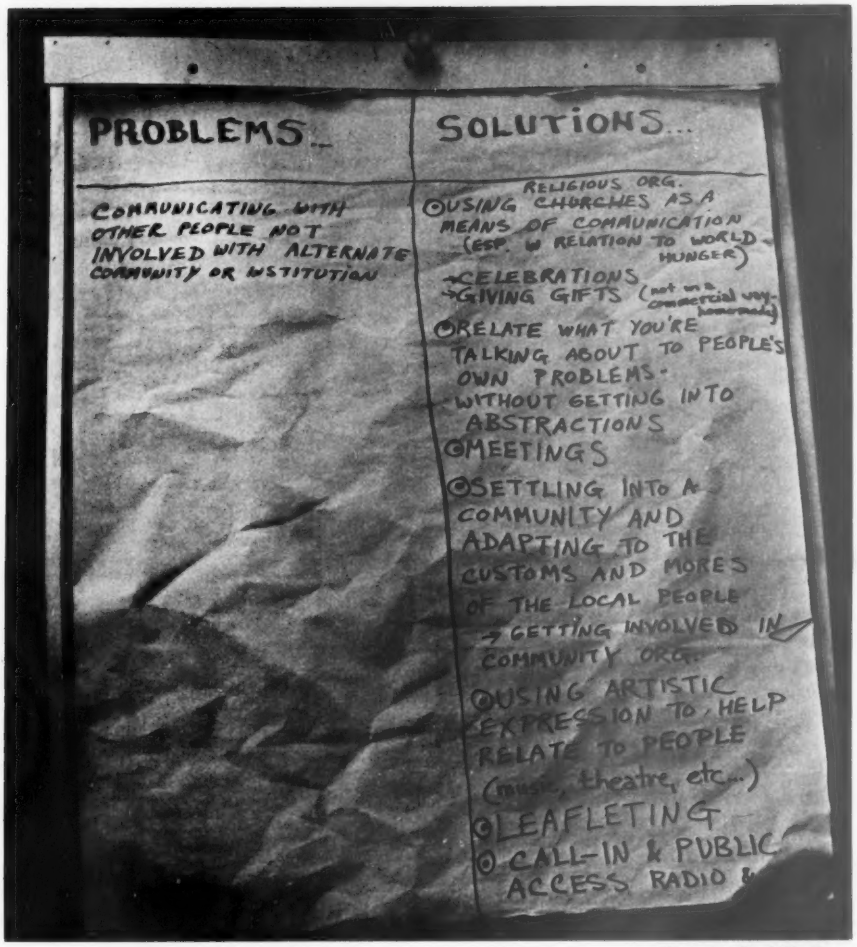
PROBLEMS
SOLUTIONS
COMMUNICATING WITH OTHER PEOPLE NOT INVOLVED WITH ALTERNATE COMMUNITY OR INSTITUTION
USING CHURCHES AS A MEANS OF COMMUNICATION (ESP. W RELATION TO WORLD HUNGER)
CELEBRATIONS
GIVING GIFTS
RELATE WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT TO PEOPLE'S OWN PROBLEMS. WITHOUT GETTING INTO ABSTRACTIONS
MEETINGS
SETTLING INTO A COMMUNITY AND ADAPTING TO THE CUSTOMS AND MORES OF THE LOCAL PEOPLE
GETTING INVOLVED IN COMMUNITY ORG.
USING ARTISTIC EXPRESSION TO HELP RELATE TO PEOPLE
LEAFLETING
CALL-IN & PUBLIC ACCESS RADIO

photo by Karl Bissinger

ANOTHER AMERICA

1976 WRL National Conference

by Joanne Sheehan

This year's annual WRL Conference was held at the Brandywine Hilltop Y Camp in Downingtown, PA., from Wednesday August 11 thru Saturday August 14. Except for the food, there were few complaints about the conference site. There was adequate space and facilities (indoors and our) for meetings, parties and play; and people participated in all three enthusiastically. Although there were the inevitable tensions and conflicts that arise at annual WRL gatherings, this year they seemed more like growing pains.

The conference began with a panel discussion on visions for a different society. The panelists were people close to the League. David McReynolds spoke on socialism, Betty Brantner on feminism, and Marj Swann on alternate communities and lifestyles. William Douthard was to have spoken on urban realities, but could not be there because he was attending the SCLC Conference in Biloxi, Miss. Sylvia Jackson, a conference participant from St. Louis, asked to speak in his place.

On Thursday people met in the morning and again in the afternoon to discuss one of the four topics presented by the panel. Some of the groups continued to meet regularly (the socialist caucus held the record with four meetings) while ideas for further workshops grew out of scheduled ones.

On Friday there were no pre-scheduled workshops, but many arose out of a variety of interests. Sessions were held on being gay, prisons, Puerto Rico, and opposition to nuclear weapons among others. Betty Brantner shared her experiences at the International Women's Gathering in France (co-sponsored by the WRI and IFOR) which she had just returned from; and the men's group continued to meet.

Evening sessions on Thursday and Friday dealt with the Continental Walk, the Middle East, War Tax Resistance, Southern Africa, and the pacifism of the WRL. Anand Patwardhan showed his film "The Waves of Revolution" which he had smuggled out of India.

In planning the conference for this year, the Conference Committee felt that it was important to schedule in time for things other than workshops. On Thursday and Friday evenings after dinner people met in small groups for an hour and shared their feelings about how the conference was going, what they were into, and got to know each other better. Recreation time was also included on the agenda. A regional volleyball game had been planned for Thursday afternoon. Some folks felt that was too competitive an activity for pacifists to be engaging in, so they planned a cooperative scavenger hunt for the following afternoon. Collectively people were to find 53 objects in 53 minutes in honor of WRL's 53 years. Neither happened, mainly because the pool was opened at the same time, and people were busy playing water games — with political overtones, of course.

The water game "Marco-Polo" (a version of "Blind Man's Bluff") was turned into "Marxist-Leninist"; and a game of "keep away" made many a pacifist act ferociously. There was also an anarchist versus socialist softball game. The socialists were ahead 7 to 5 when the game was called off in the 4th due to rain. It will be resumed next year.

Socializing (and anarchizing) took place each evening. There was singing around the campfire, dancing, Black Jack games going until 3 a.m., and plenty of beer and wine consumed. Charlie King and his guitar added much to the spirit.

With an extra day added to the schedule, and more time for getting together, the conference had a different tone than in the past. But there were also other reasons. Rather than concentrate on "issues" (the Middle East, Amnesty), although they were discussed, the primary conference concerns focused more on changing society and our priorities. The opening panel set that tone by discussing socialism, feminism, urban realities and

Panelists and conference organizers resting outside the lodge: Sylvia Jackson, Betty Johanna (Brantner), David McReynolds, Ann Davidon, Marj Swann, and Joanne Sheehan.
photo by Karl Bissinger

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alternatives as priorities. Those discussions continued throughout Thursday. Questions and ideas arose such as: In the context of working towards a socialist society, WRL should work in and with communities more, and should call a conference of socialist oriented groups to deal with socialism and nonviolence. The relationship of feminism to pacifism must be dealt with within the league, and there needs to be a better understanding of what feminist concerns are. How can alternate communities and institutions become less marginal (counter-culture) and begin to include those who truly need alternatives to the present system? Is WRL, a predominately white middle-class organization, concerned about relating to minority peoples, and how?

These are only a few of the questions raised during the conference, and there should be continual discussion and actions on these concerns within the league on the local and national level throughout the year. The National Committee passed several resolutions in order to help facilitate dealing with these concerns. They include convening a conference of socialist groups in Washington around the time that the Continental Walk arrives there, encouraging regional gatherings on feminism, and having more of an emphasis within the league to work more closely with people in their local communities, particularly being sensitive to the needs of minority groups.

Although feminism was only one of four "topics" to be discussed, the question of WRL having a "feminist perspective" was raised throughout the conference. Although the conference as a whole did not deal with what a feminist perspective meant, there was more discussion and growth in understanding feminist concerns than in the past, and hopefully, this is the beginning of a new consciousness within the WRL.

If we are serious about building "Another America" we must continue to explore nonviolent ways and means to help that come about. This year's WRL Conference moved us along in that direction.

Joanne Sheehan is on the Conference Continuations Committee and WRL E.C.

Rick Gaumer and Joanne Sheehan doing the hard work of getting folks registered. *photo by Grace Hedemann*

Conferees playing "keep away" in the Brandywine camp pool.
photo by Grace Hedemann

MORE PHOTOS

Jamie Mc Gloin-King, one of the youngest WRLers at the conference. His dad, Charlie King, sang and played the guitar during the three day affair lifting all our spirits. *photo by Grace Hedemann*

Men getting together for a workshop on "men getting it together". *photo by Ed Hedemann*

The "famous" anarchist/socialist softball game. Socialists at bat. *photo by Grace Hedemann*

Smiles abound following last National Committee session. *photo by Karl Bissinger*

SUBSIDIZE PEOPLE NOT WEAPONS

by Craig Simpson

The Albuquerque WRL demonstrated at the Kirtland Air Force Base Open House and Air Show on June 19. The group organized actions at the base entrance as well as inside during the air show. Three of us were inside when the program began of marching bands, F-111s bombers and rescue helicopter performances. We unfurled a huge banner and began leafleting through the crowd during the helicopter rescue. We entered the performance area in front of several hundred people during the largest event of the day before security police became concerned about our presence. The head of security became most upset. He said that if we left the performance area, we could leaflet by the floats and exhibits all day. We took him up on it and spent three hours talking with folks. The demonstration was a success and a victory for this was the first time in six years we were legally allowed to leaflet on Kirtland. A meaningful and exciting day was had by all.

Craig Simpson, former WRI intern and WRL Albuquerque organizer. Currently, unemployed die shop worker. Fired for his union organizing. Plans to continue organizing in the community as well as outside the factory.

Albuquerque WRL demonstrating at Kirtland Air Force Base. *photo by Albuquerque friend*

A LIVING TRIBUTE TO GUNNAR PETERSON

On June 9 Gunnar Peterson, Director of Recreation for the Province of Novia Scotia, died. His wife, Betty Peterson, asked that gifts be sent either to War Resisters League or the Fellowship of Reconciliation and several checks were turned over to us by the attorneys for the estate. Since Gunnar Peterson had dedicated his life to the preservation of peace and to those natural resources which contribute to the growth of the human spirit, we were honored to receive funds in his name and count them as a living memorial.

JAPANESE CONTINUED

Walk organizers. We, too, may need to beg in the streets this coming year to raise those funds. But we must, both for reasons of courtesty and for reasons of the hard politics of survival, which is based on unity of the people, make certain that Japanese *people* know that we stand with them. The "Japanese connection" is one more example of the many times over the past three decades that WRL has reached out and established *concrete links* between peoples *at a political level*. This October the drums of Japan will beat in Washington,D.C. as next August the guitars of America will be heard in Hiroshima.

David McReynold is on WRL staff.

Shika Be'ery at UFW rally during the Spring of 1975. *photo by Karl Bissinger*

SHIKA BE'ERY 1945 – 1976

During the National Committee meeting we received word that a dear friend of the League, Shika Be'ery, had been killed in an automobile accident.

Shika was born in pre-Israel Palestine in 1945. Raised on a kibbutz, he was jailed for refusing to fight in the Israeli army during the 1973 war. He came to New York City in late 1974. WRL was helpful in raising money for the bond the Immigration Department demanded, and which he paid back quickly. Shika and his truck were always available to ferry mail to the post office, move office equipment, and do endless personal favors. He was especially helpful when the calendars were being mailed out.

In the several years we knew him he became an important part of our lives. There is no way in which we can express our loss and our love for this warm, funny, beloved friend.

THE 1977 PEACE CALENDAR and APPOINTMENT BOOK

Provocative statements, excerpts and quotations about how and what we teach our kids. And the better, more creative ways that we *could* be teaching them.

Over 50 contributors—from John Holt to Doris Lessing, from Ralph Waldo Emerson to Bob Dylan—criticize the status quo, argue with each other and help *you* to understand why our education "system" fails our children and/steps we need to take to raise kids for a creative, just and peaceful future.

More than a practical calendar, this is a book that will be treasured long after the year is over.

Its 128 pages have a page for every week of the year and include a listing of peace organizations and periodicals, American and foreign. Important dates in the history of the movement for social change are noted.

Only $3 each, four for $11. Ideal for holiday gift giving! Order immediately from WRL, 339 Lafayette Street, New York,NY 10012.

Special Notice

Though the 1977 calendar is ready (and stored at our office), we cannot ship them to you until the first of October when we have sufficient number of ordered to mail them bulk rate. The reason for this delay is the sky rocketing costs of mailing. To send a single calendar costs 50 cents; two calendars cost 94 cents. In sharp contrast, sending them bulk reduces the postage cost for a single calendar to 15 cents; and double orders to 29½ cents.

REPORT ON WRL QUESTIONNAIRE

with SELECTIVE SUMMARY OF RESULTS

by Joan Todd

The partially tabulated results of the recent WRL membership survey reveal the following profile of the organization's adherents (based on 912 questionnaires—figures are rough, intended to give a general picture, not to pinpoint precise percentages).

The "average" member of WRL is a white (97%) male (60%) in his mid-thirties (33% from 22-25 years; 50% from 22-50 years) who teaches (about 10%), probably at the university level, or is involved in some other professional or social service work. He has had graduate education (graduate or post-graduate 55%; some college 60%), but his salary is less than $15,000/year (49% claim less than $10,000 income, but figures may be wildly inaccurate due to many listing single rather than family incomes). He is equally likely to be religious (51%) or unaffiliated (49%). If he is affiliated, he is most likely to be a Quaker or Roman Catholic, or in descending order, Unitarian, Jewish or Methodist. Our composite WRLer is probably not a union member (union 19%), but if he is, he probably belongs to a teacher's union. He lives in a nuclear family (56%) or alone (25%) in an urban area (49% urban; 31% suburdan; 18% rural), near a WRL (39%) with which he does not work (66%). Nevertheless, if there is no WRL near him (30%) or don't know (30%), he thinks he would work with one if there were. Our mythical pacifist (67%) considers himself a liberal (40%) and/or radical (42%) and may even find democratic socialism (30%) compatible with democratic capitalism (8%). Emerson's "foolish consistency" is not the hobgoblin of his broad mind. He could use some consciousness-raising, however (only 27½% identify themselves as feminists). Our typical member's participation in the Movement includes demonstrating (89%), aiding draft resistance (33%); by counseling (66% from aiders group); seeking C.O. status (50% from resisters group); working for a local peace group (88%) and formerly, by refusing to pay his telephone tax (almost 50%). His commitment is far less likely to extend to getting arrested during a demonstration (17% of which only half once), aiding draft resistance so as to place himself in jeopardy of arrest, or refusing to pay part of his income tax (14% still refuse; 24% once refused). He has also capitulated to Ma Bell's harassment and currently pays his telephone tax (20% still refuse). He has never served in the military (19% of total sample and 30% of the men sampled) and plans (reluctantly to vote (78%) for the Democratic candidate (approximately 50%) or left-wing third party candidate or write-in candidate (23%). He belongs to the ACLU, AFSC or FOR (50% each) and reads *WIN* (40%) in addition to *Fellowship, Catholic Worker, New York Review of Books* and/or *Progressive* (20-25%). The causes nearest his heart are disarmament (66%) and nonviolent education/training (50%); also the C.I.A., amnesty and imperialism cause him concern (over 33% each). Although in general he is full of praise for WRL, he might like to see more community organizing, direct and legislative action (10% to 24% each). organizing, direct and legislative action (10% to 24% each).

So much for the average WRLer. As we all know, WRLers are not average. Questionnaire respondents include the man whose formal education ended with the 8th grade but has conducted a "perpetual inquiry" ever since (He is now over 70), a Jew by affiliation, Taoist by "head," a "Sant Mat," several male and female individuals(?), an omniscient being who has "always" known about WRL and another who "invented" it, a Teamster "under coercion only," and an eclectic bunch of "humans" and "humanists" who defy all our labels, saying with Walt Whitman,

"Do I contradict myself?
Very well then, I contradict myself,
I am large, I contain multitudes."

Joan Todd is a WRL Executive Committee member who tabulated the results from the WRL Questionnaire. We thank her muchly for her hours of work.

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